

Viking Saga

Northwest High School
Grand Island, Nebraska
Vol 50 Special Issue

Lady Vikings:
2012 Class B
State Volleyball
Champs!



Congratulations, L

Lady Vikings exceed all expectations

Courtney Lierman
STAFF WRITER

After losing five starting seniors in 2011, many people questioned what Northwest volleyball would have to offer in the 2012 season. The girls knew losing those seniors would be a huge change for the team. Fans and spectators of Northwest volleyball wondered how far the team would make it in the season.

The girls, however, brushed off all the negativity, and knew they would give it their all—they had to prove these people wrong.

There was talk around the school that Northwest would be getting three new players for the upcoming season. This came true when Morgan Westphal, Kennadi Keezer and Erin Sorhan transferred to Northwest. Rouzee knew it would be tough to find room for all these players in the court, but she didn't realize what was in store for her team.

The team worked hard all summer and attended many camps. In a summer tournament in Omaha, the Northwest team ranked up with class A schools. The coaching staff and players began to realize that they had one thing most teams didn't: determination.

As the season neared, chatter continued to fill Grand Island about the Vikings.

However, throughout the season, the Vikings encountered some heart-wrenching tragedies. Two men who were very close and supportive of the team passed away. Though this was tough for the team to handle, they came together to realize just what life was about.

This could have very well been the piece that made the team's puzzle complete. The Vikes continued to play together with their two angels looking over them.

Mid-season, the Vikes went to Columbus Lakeview for conference and came home conference champs. This kept the ball rolling for these girls. After their last few regular season games, the Vikes moved on to their next big milestone: Districts. After sweeping Hastings, Coach Rouzee reached her 600th career win.

Showing up two nights later to defeat Aurora, the Viking girls claimed their district championship for the 12th consecutive year.

Players, coaches and fans began to

realize that this team was the real deal. The girls were in it to win it, and nothing would stop them.

Anticipation grew in every Northwest fan as state volleyball approached. Coaches and players seemed confident going into state as the number one seed. The volleyball team knew there were big shoes to fill, since Coach Rouzee has led her previous five teams to state runner-up.

Coach Rouzee said going into state, she felt confident with her girls.

"They were aggressive and competitive on the court. After beating Pius in three sets, at Pius, I knew we had a good shot at being in the championship again."

At State, the Viking girls took hold of the reins as they defeated York, in four sets. They came out fired up again the next day to slide past Waverly in three sets. This meant the Vikings would be playing in the state championship game yet again.

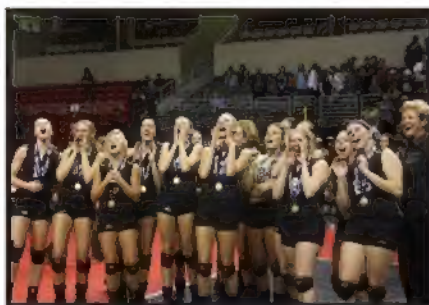
Saturday, November 10th, was the day the Vikes awaited all year. It was time. Anticipation grew throughout the event center as each player of the Northwest and Gretna teams were announced.

The first point of the match was given to Gretna on an ace block. However, the faces of the Northwest volleyball players showed that they were not going to back down. Northwest took the first set 25-22, but Gretna fired back with a 31-29 win over the Vikes in the second set.

Northwest bounced back in the third set to win 25-20. Gretna stepped up their game in the fourth set to take down the Vikes 25-11.

With tight scoring matches, spectators thought it might be another runner-up year. But the Viking girls knew it was the perfect time to come out and make their dreams come true. With back and forth rallies, it was hard to pick which team would come out on top.

After having the lead early in the



match, Northwest continued to battle as Gretna tried pushing through for the win.

"When we were down 13-12, in the 5th set, I really wasn't sure if we would be able to pull it off," said Rouzee. Hearts were pounding, sweat was dripping and voices were roaring as the Vikes were neck-and-neck with the Dragons.

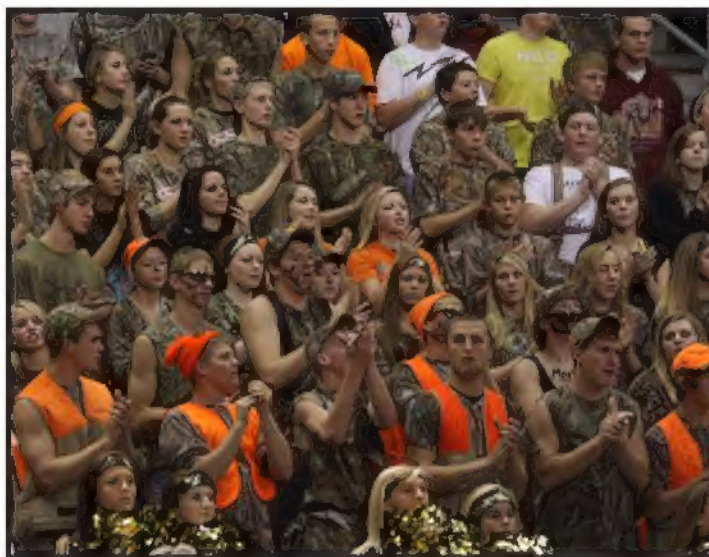
At 14-13, the Vikes played for the win. Gretna got the next point, tying the Vikes 14-14. With loud clapping, Katie Placke tossed the ball to serve. After a long and vigorous rally, Morgan Westphal sealed the Vikings' fate with an ace block.

Tears of joy filled the players as they dog piled each other mid-court. The volleyball girls and coaches finally got to experience what it was like to put that gold medal around their necks, rather than the silver.

"Having coach Rouzee put that first place medal around my neck, made me realize that everything I worked for this season was worth it!" said junior McKenzie Brown.



Lady Vikings



Should it stay or should it go?

Two staffers' opinions on the State tourney in GI

Move State Volleyball back to Lincoln

Madison Hedges
STAFF WRITER

As a fan, going to state volleyball is fun no matter the location. I understand for a player of Northwest why they like State Volleyball to be in Grand Island; they get to sleep in their own beds, they don't have to worry about leaving anything behind, and they seem to have a bigger fan section.

For me, I enjoyed going to Lincoln to support the girls, but I did not have to worry about forgetting anything, or getting enough rest. I just had to worry about cheering loud, and supporting the team. It was always a fun trip down to Lincoln, to get a hotel for a weekend away. I not only got to watch great volleyball in Lincoln, but while I was there visiting I got to eat at restaurants we do not

have in Grand Island, and, of course, go shopping.

When I think about Lincoln I always think about how many different things they have to do there and how fun it is to get away from Grand Island. Now Grand Island is starting to catch up with some of the restaurants, and only about half of the shopping.

Having State Volleyball in Lincoln gives a great excuse to go watch great volleyball, eat somewhere different for every meal, and do some shopping at the stores we do not hit up very often.

Lincoln is close enough for a day trip, or far enough for a weekend stay in a hotel. Either way, as a fan, I enjoy Lincoln being the destination for State Volleyball. It may be a trip for some, but Lincoln offers so much more than Grand Island does.

Keep State Volleyball in Grand Island

Neleigh Hall
STAFF WRITER

As a volleyball player, I enjoy having State in Grand Island.

The reason why I like having it here is because with all the things we have going on its nice to know if I forget something I can easily get it. If it was still in Lincoln that would be very stressful. Also having state in Grand Island, I feel like we have a bigger crowd to support us, which is always helpful. Also it's nice because as a team we can have practices before we go off a play a big game. We also have the opportunity to talk to our coaches about the game plan.

When state was in Lincoln we had to stay in a hotel, which is always fun

don't get me wrong, but it's convenient to stay in my own bed at night. Finally, Grand Island is growing every day, we are getting new stores and restaurants such as: Olive Garden and Texas Road House.

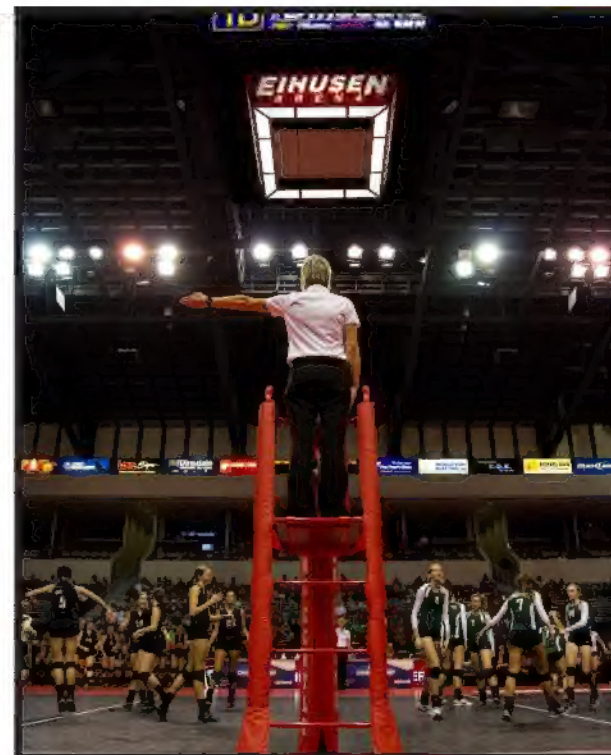
Having State Volleyball gives those new businesses the chance to show off what they have to offer. Grand Island has opened many more hotels since the State Fair. Since State Volleyball has moved to Grand Island, we need more space for everyone. Also, Grand Island is the place to be right now. Yes, it would be an experience to play in the Collis, although winning state is a huge accomplishment wherever you are.

Overall, having state in Grand Island is a lot better than having it in Lincoln.

2012 Class B State Volleyball Champions



(Front Row): Kylee Washington, Morgan Westphal, Kaley Werner, Neleigh Hall, Morgan Mallory, Nicole Broich, Cassie Kaspar (Second Row): Kayla Bachle, Allison Beckmann, McKenzie Brown, Katelynn Placke, Alyssa Martin, Kennadi Keezer, Angelica Carlini, Erin Sorahan, MacKenzie Burnham, Rachel Phinney, Nicole Phinney (Third Row) Danielle Judds, Kylie Luth, Hannah Klanecky, Taylor Wieland, Gabrielle Candle, Aubrey Fisher, Brandi Niemoth, Erin Schleicher, Audra Cooksley, Allie Carlini, Bailey Parr, Kaitlin Warner, Jordyn Retzlaff, Samantha Sonnenfeld





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